CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

"HOW BEAUTIFUL UPON THE MOUNTAINS, ARE THE FEET OF HIM THAT BRINGETH GOOD TIDINGS, THAT PUBLISHETH PEACE."—Isa. lii, 7.

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FOR THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

GOD'S WAYS JUSTIFIED.

A Short Sermon.

"Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth. My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass; because I will publish the name of the Lord; ascribe ye greatness unto our God." Deut. xxxii, 1—3.

"'Tis grave philosophy's absurdest dream,
That Heaven's intentions are not what they seem.
That only shadows are dispensed below,
And earth has no reality but wo."

Superstition has proved a curse to man, and the bane of human enjoyment. From the beginning of creation of human intelligences, the imagination of the heart has been evil. Every generation has perpetuated the error, and mankind universally have shared in the inheritance of this cause of human suffering. Superstition plucked the fruit from the forbidden tree. Superstition reared altars to imaginary deities—carved the senseless log, and shaped the idol—immolated the victim—divested the soul of social principles—stifled the godlike sensibilities of the heart—banished love, the divine impress and image, and substituted fear, the progenitor of hatred, and the cause of that moral cowardice which desolates the earth. "The pestilence that walketh in darkness, and wasteth at noonday," has slain its thousands—superstition has murdered millions. No wonder, therefore, that Paul told the wise men of Athens, "he perceived that in all things they were too superstitious."

Divines have said that pride originated evil. I shall dissent, and say, Superstition was the origin. Man's imagination has been constantly producing—superstition has been the constant fruit. Unreasonable, or false hopes and fears have beset men from the beginning. Mankind have feared where no danger existed---hoped and expected where no good awaited them. Men have sought out inventions. The realities of truth have been overlooked or despised. Imagination has conjured from the chaos of nothingness, shadows, which have struck dread into the souls of men; and *fear* has been a stimulation to acts of idolatry and cruelty. A mighty delusion has prevailed. The insanity of fear, and the horror of apprehension, have been considered proofs of devotion. The mind which has been most deluded, or most fruitful in conceiving terrible and desolating attributes in a deity, has been accounted the sincerest worshipper. The wretch whose soul has been divested of all the finer feelings and sensibilities of humanity, has claimed the character of a saint; and adduced his more than brutal insensibility as conclusive evidence of his holiness. And he whose religious arrogance has usurped all the faculties of his mind, and chained him fast in the thraldom of Bigotry, is, in his own estimation, one of the few exclusive favorites of insulted Heaven. And the poor, bereaved suppliant in error, whose sincerity has proved an overmatch for presumptive impudence, fancies himself a reprobate, and excluded by God's decree from Heaven's bliss.

Reason, philosophy, and Scripture sanction the position, that God hath made or created all things for his glory; or, in other words, FOR THE MANIFESTATION OF HIS GOODNESS. This doctrine, and this only, drops as the rain. This speech, and none other, distils as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb. And these magnificently merciful, and gloriously good purposes, and these only, resemble the copious showers which dispense, indiscriminately, vegetable life and blossoming splendor to the hill and the dale, and covers the earth with a rich profusion of Heaven's gifts. In no other manner can the name of the Lord be published, which is *Savior*, or true greatness be ascribed to the God of Heaven.

I would hurl from me with inexpressible detestation the doctrine that drops like the lava of enraged Etna---the speech that distils like the venom of the viper---as the pestilential effluvia which poisons the streams of existence, and scatters apprehension, horror and despair, throughout the sphere of its deadly influence.

"God hath made all things for himself," is the language of the Scriptures. The same authority declares that "God will not give his glory to another." God caused his goodness to be exhibited to Moses; and made known his intentions and his purposes to his prophets; but reserved to his Son to bring life and immortality to *light*, to the clear brilliancy of manifestation, by the gospel, in his resurrection from the dead.

It has been a common remark of clergymen, that no addition can be made to God's power, wisdom, and goodness; all his perfections being infinite. This position is a reasonable one, and upsets all the polemical whims and notions which assume as fact, the hypothesis, that the future and endless misery of offending creatures is *necessary* to vindicate the justice of God. For it follows that infinity cannot be diminished, by the same rule that it can receive no accession. Reason then, pure, unsophisticated reason, teaches, that God's *purpose* in creation, providence and redemption, is *the manifestation of his goodness, or glory.*

Superstition has taught, that the fact of the existence of sin, evil, pain, and afflictions, is an unanswerable argument against the end of these seeming evils; adducing in proof the hypothesis the supposition that if God intended from the beginning to make an end of them, he never would have permitted them to exist at all. The absolute insanity of this supposition may be seen from the following: The whole proof lies in one *fact*, which has no relation whatever to the thing to be proved; for the plain reason that the *means* are confounded with the *end* to be produced by them. As, for instance, the fact of a man's sickness, is evidence that God never intended the sufferer should attain health; because, in that case, the recipient would not have been permitted to be the subject of disease. Try this mad logic again. Man is a mortal creature, subject to death and dissolution; therefore it follows, that if God ever had intended immortality and indissolubility as the portion of man, He would have created man immortal and indissoluble in the beginning.

That I may illustrate the object of God's purpose in man's creation being the *manifestation of his goodness*, prove the truth of it conclusively, and show the falsity of the commonly received, cruel, and disgraceful doctrines of the popular preachers of the present day, the *relations* which God has caused to exist between his intelligent creation and Himself, and between them indiscriminately, shall be considered, and the *means* shown to be the only ones which could possibly produce the desired *end*. I shall therefore assume as a fact, what cannot be controverted, that *intuition* belongs to God alone; and that a knowledge of *good* and *evil* could be acquired by finite beings by no other means, effectually, but *experience;* and that the loss, or deprivation of good, and the presence of an evil, is necessary to teach them the value of the one, and the worthlessness of the other, and inspire the recipient with that wisdom which is indispensable to holiness and happiness.

The Scriptures assert (Rom. viii, 20.) in language which can neither be controverted nor evaded, that "The *creation* (*Ktisis*) was made subject to vanity." That is, under the influence or power of vanity—an absolute definable state of *sin;* with all its concomitants and evils. The character given of mankind in the Scriptures is, that they commit two evils. They forsake the Fountain of living water, God; this is the first evil. They then make broken cisterns which can hold no water—this is the second evil. Superstition builds cisterns continually. A Fountain of living water is not sufficient—it will not be safe, says superstition, to depend on it, let us make a cistern, and be sure.

God is represented in the Scriptures as the *Father* of all mankind. Hence the exhortation —When ye pray, "say, *Our Father.*" God, then, is, emphatically, the Father of his intelligent creation. This is the relation which exists between God and mankind, and is the *foundation of all true religion.* The same authority declares of mankind, that *all are brethren.* One great Family, and God the Head of it, and UNIVERSAL FATHER! As the relation which exists between God and his intelligent creation is the foundation of all true religion, the *knowledge* of God, his real character and perfection, is indispensable to the enjoyment of Him, in order that the recipient shall attain to the most perfect holiness, and consequent happiness.

Reader, how shall this momentous end be attained? How shall mankind, the children of the King of Heaven, be educated, and fitted and prepared for the high and exalted destiny for which they were created? I answer—In the *School of Christ*, their Head—the Head of every man. In the school of experience. The captain of man's salvation *was made perfect through suffering.* "Zion shall be redeemed with judgment." Redeemed from the folly and madness of forsaking a Fountain of living waters, and building cisterns which can hold no water. Redeemed from ignorance, and be initiated, and brought to the knowledge of all that is good, and all that is excellent. The parable of the Prodigal Son, is a beautiful and comprehensive epitome of the great world of mankind. They must go from their Father. They must eat the husks of disobedience before they will learn the folly of transgression, and set their faces Heaven-ward. Then their eyes will be opened. They will say, In our Father's house is enough and to spare—we will arise and go to our Father. A universal jubilee will celebrate the day when a Prodigal World shall return, and "the kingdom of this world become the kingdom of our God, and of his Christ."

"If I be a FATHER, where is MINE HONOR? saith the Lord of Hosts." Reader, if you are a

father, where is your *honor?* Is it in having your children condemned as incorrigible malefactors, and consigned to a dungeon forever? Does a father's honor consist in the depravity and consequent wretchedness of his offspring? Can you find a salvo in the declaration that your miserable progeny deserves the punishment, and that thereby *justice* is vindicated? I reiterate the question—If you are a *father*, where is your *honor?* Is it not in the correct deportment of your children? In their proficiency in whatever is praiseworthy and excellent? I ask the question, Has not the common consent of every nation, tongue, and people, in all ages of the world, agreed; that parents are dishonored by the unworthy conduct of their offspring? And is not the converse of the proposition equally true, and supported, and attested by the universal acceptation of mankind? This evidence is irresistible. Here no passions or predilections growing out of the politics, business, and common sources of contention among mankind, can be supposed to mar the conclusion by any undue influence. No. 'Tis the language of pure, unsophisticated *Nature*. If you are a father, you are honored or disgraced by the conduct of your children, just in proportion to the excellence, or the unworthiness of their characters and conduct.

Now let the interrogation come, with all the power of conviction—"If I be a *Father*, where is mine *honor?* saith the LORD of Hosts." God hath set his Seal upon universal Nature; and the question is answered—In the obedience, wisdom, and consequent happiness of God's children. How shall this be effected, this glorious end be attained? I answer—In the School of Christ.

The language of the Great Father of mankind is, "I have brought up children, and they have rebelled against me." How shall the honor of the Father of these rebellious children be vindicated? How! Send them to an interminable hell—let endless wrath and fury consume them with never-ending pains, says orthodoxy; and divine justice shall be vindicated. Justice, say you, divine justice—'Tis the *Honor* of Heaven's King, I speak of, How will you vindicate that? "WHERE IS MINE HONOR? saith the Lord of Hosts." God will vindicate his justice in a way that shall not detract from his honor; for He says, "I have seen his ways, and will heal him; I will lead him also, and restore comfort unto him and to his mourners."

A mighty difference exists between God's plan of salvation, and man's plan of damnation. Between God's ways and thoughts, and man's ways and thoughts. High as the Heavens are above the earth—far as the East is from the West, is the difference.

Reader, a finite being, of a consequent limited capacity, in his progress through life, whether in business or the arts, is almost continually interrupted with *contingent* obstacles, which obstruct his progress, and frequently derange his plans and designs; and these difficulties characterize the creature who encounters them, and expose his imperfections. Not so with the Infinite JEHOVAH. There are no *contingents* with Him. No obstacle exists in the universe where Infinity operates. The little, puny, imbecile, strutting animal, and foolish creature, y'clept *man*, sometimes talks about what the Infinite Sovereign of all worlds *can*, and *cannot* do! and of what the Infinite JEHOVAH can, or may, or cannot be *supposed* to know! I cannot find words or language to express my sentiments—What! An animal so imperfect and degraded by his follies, that the more humble and wise of the race, has claimed consanguinity with the *worm*, this convention of matter and mortality, *assumes* the prerogative of analyzing Infinity, and giving laws to the Dread Sovereign of the Universe!

"God will do all his pleasure," is not more the language of the Scriptures, than it is in perfect consonance with reason and true philosophy. Stretch the mind on the rack of conception, until past duration shall dwindle to a point in the distance, before created intelligence had any being, and JEHOVAH is the same. No contingent can crowd itself into that medium which owes its existence to Almighty power, and Infinite wisdom. I will go farther—The Universe neither contains nor admits of any such thing as a *contingent*. The term is a misnomer, unless it be associated with human imperfection, and be received as a synonyma with the stumbling-block of human ignorance and imbecility.

How shall God manifest His goodness? I can conceive of but one answer to this interrogation, namely—By the *exercise of it*. I have another question—How shall goodness be exercised without *subjects?* It cannot be. Again—How can there be subjects for the exercise of goodness, in any other way or manner than by *needing* the blessings which goodness can bestow? Reader, you will better understand me by considering the following: Are you a Physician? of what value or use can your medical science, and practical medical knowledge be among a community who all enjoy perfect health? Under such circumstances you would be the most useless member of society; and could only manifest the value or utility of your professional skill among a community who needed its exercise. Christ said, he came to call sinners to repentance; assigning as a reason, that the whole need not a physician, but those that are sick. All mankind are sick. "There is none good, no, not one." God, therefore, has an universal field for the manifestation of His goodness. Will He thus manifest His goodness, by exercising it for the benefit of all who need it? What a question! but it is, nevertheless, deserving an answer. Reader, the Book says of the wisdom from above, that it is "full of mercy and good fruits; without partiality, and without hypocrisy."

We come now to the pith and marrow of our subject. How could Christ Jesus, the Son of God, the Mediator be glorified by the exercise of his love, obedience, and his willingness to suffer, in any other way or manner, than that which God has ordered, and produced by His providence? How could God's boundless love, infinite wisdom, and Almighty power be manifested, and find subjects for their exercise, in any other way or manner, than among a world of sinners? And how could this world of sinners ever experience God's various goodness, and learn the extent of His perfections, and the glory of His character, by any other means than by those now employed?

Man is a creature degraded by sin; but destined by his Maker to an exalted condition of holiness and wisdom in another and a better world. No created mind can conceive the purity and height of man's future exaltation. It is a reasonable conclusion, and in perfect consonance with all proper views of God's wisdom and goodness, that mankind by their experience and sufferings, the consequence of disobedience, and alienation from their Heavenly Father, may confer benefits, and the most invaluable knowledge and wisdom on countless myriads of inhabitants of other worlds; all creatures of the same Universal Father, and all destined to the same peaceful home.

Reader, I have another question to ask, How shall mankind manifest their goodness, or, in other words, display the various faculties and abilities which God has bestowed on them, in any other way or manner, than by the means now employed? A simple recital of facts will help to illustrate our subject. God created man. The constitution of his being is well known, as every individual can attest for him or herself, that imperfection and mortality is the lot of man. There can, therefore, be no dispute relative to what man *is;* the grand inquiry is, what man *shall be?*

What is *goodness?* People talk about goodness as they talk about many things, and too frequently without any consistent ideas of the subject of discussion. As a criterion, consider goodness to consist in whatever is proper and right, and best under all circumstances; and the opposite of every thing that is wrong, or evil. Man has departed from this goodness, and chosen evil for good. This is the grand difficulty. Justice (that is God's justice, and there is no other) does not require that the offender shall be cruelly tormented, as a penalty for offending; but that "the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and turn unto the Lord, who will have compassion, and abundantly pardon." God's justice requires this—nothing short of this can satisfy Divine Justice.

God is the Father of mankind, and all men are brethren. This is the relation which exists. In this relation is to be found the germ of every thing deserving the name of religion. Now go back to the threshold of the inquiry, and examine our subject to the very bottom. How could God, the Father's perfections be manifested to his creatures, if they had been created and preserved, by Almighty power, in a state of innocence? How could man's perfections, that is, the necessary intellectual faculties, indispensable to his wisdom, knowledge and happiness, be manifested in any other way, or by any other means, than by *experiencing* the evils of sin, and a departure from God? Had immortality been conferred on man at his creation, *death* could never have been known; and its herald, sickness or disease, existed to call forth the ennobling charities of the heart. No Savior could then have appeared to restore lost man, and confer upon him the salvation of a pardoning God. Had man been kept, *de facto*, in a state of sinless obedience, God's character of a merciful, kind, forbearing, pitying and forgiving Being, would never have been manifested, and man must have existed forever in ignorance of the glorious perfections of the Deity. In this case man could not possess a single motive for worship and admiration of the King of Heaven, which now exists, by the exercise and display of his glorious attributes.

Another and more obvious reason can be assigned. Creatures must look up. They must reason. They neither have nor can possess *intuition*. The elements of knowledge must be made visible to their understandings—the sources of a progressive proficiency must be opened to them. They must "look through nature up to nature's God." Their own attributes, powers, affections and faculties, must have room for their display, and objects for their action, in order to lead them to a just appreciation of God's character. Mere *negative* goodness is nothing. Inert matter is perfectly innocent. A stone has never sinned—it is as holy, so far as a sinless state is in question, as the holiest angel in Heaven. But a stone, however innocent, is inert, and utterly incapable of exercising any one of the virtues which constitute a Godly character. Man is required to "be perfect, even as his Father in Heaven is perfect." Unless the perfections of man's Heavenly Father are manifested, man never can know or follow them as examples. God is kind to the unthankful and the evil. But if there never had existed any unthankful and evil persons, God's particular goodness in these instances, which is so glorious to His character, would forever have been a secret to all created intelligences. Man must *experience* God's forgiveness himself, for his own unthankfulness and sins, in order to be qualified with knowledge, and acquire a holy spirit to induce and enable him to forgive his fellows.

God's works, or economy of providence and

Redemption, are the discipline of His school, for his creatures to learn the glories of His character, that they may know Him, and be like Him. Therefore, had *sin* never existed, God would never have been known as a Savior; or His Son Jesus as the Christ, the Messiah and Mediator; and man never have known the glorious character of his Heavenly Father. Had *death* never come into the world of mankind, man, then, could not be the subject of a resurrection in the Heavenly image, to honor, glory, incorruption, and immortality; and would forever have been debarred the privileges of a mortal state, and have lost all the blessings growing out of the experience attending it, of God's goodness. Nay, more than this: The Universe would have been a blank, so far as respects the light which has been shed by Redemption, and Salvation. Sympathy would be sunk in eternal night; for no sufferer could call it forth. Pity, Godlike pity would not be known; for no subject could exist to require its exercise. Love—*Almighty Love*, would never have descended from the Empyrean Heaven, had not *hatred* reared its destructive form, and shewn, in contrast, the excellency of the darling attribute of Heaven's King. And Charity, the crowning attribute of the Christian's character, had not sin existed to require its birth, would have been buried in one commingled mass with the splendors of God's transcendant attributes beneath the abysses of His eternity. Well has Inspiration spoken, "That where SIN has abounded grace shall much more abound:—and that as sin has reigned unto DEATH, even so shall grace reign, through righteousness, unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord."

I will admit, that a sort of *negative* happiness might have existed, had sin never been permitted to appear, and mortality to disturb the repose of man. But I will contend, that GOD'S WAYS ARE JUSTIFIED by His plan of creation, providence, and redemption; for this plan admits of a full display of all the perfections of the Divine Character, and open a door for man's exaltation to a glorious perfection of being. God will be known under all the circumstances which can display his perfections, convey the knowledge of them to His creatures, and by initiating them into the Wisdom from above, advance them to a state of perfection, and make them participants of that wisdom and knowledge which will confer perfect happiness. Under any other plan of existence, or constitution of being, man must for ever have been kept in ignorance of God's character, and preserved in a state of *negative* happiness and inglorious innocence; mere *machines*, incapable, from ignorance, of appreciating merit; and powerless, from constitutional imbecility, to do evil. This would merely constitute a knowledge of good in the abstract, without knowing what goodness is—a passive acquiescence in whatever is, without the power of estimating qualities; or the disposition to give a preference to one thing above another for the excellency of its properties, and intrinsic merits.

God's ways will be justified, for he hath created all things for *the manifestation of His goodness*. In perfect conformity to this doctrine is the declaration of Inspiration—"Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee; and the remainder thereof wilt thou restrain." Reader, this declaration will illustrate and confirm the view I have taken, and the doctrine I have inculcated. For we must admit that the wrath, sin, disobedience, or rebellion of man, (which mean the same thing,) will either praise God, or will not praise Him. But the declaration is clear as words can make it, and as positive as language can be, that the wrath, or sin, of man shall praise God; and when it will not have this effect, if permitted, God will not permit wrath or sin to exist. Remember the *relations* which exists. A *Father* declares, that the wrath, or sin of his *children* shall praise him; and that he will restrain all wrath, or sin in his children, when it will not redound to his praise. Give ear, O ye heavens, and hear O earth, the doctrine that drops as the rain. All the sins of mankind shall, by the wonder-working hand of the Great Father, be made to praise Him. All the sufferings and afflictions of mankind, the children of the Great Father, shall operate finally for their profit. Their momentary suffering shall, through, and by Jesus, their Head and Redeemer, "work out for them an exceeding eternal weight of glory." Remember the divine interrogation. "If I be a Father, *where is mine honor?* saith the LORD of Hosts." All Nature cries aloud—A *father's* honor consists in the obedience, the virtue, the wisdom, the happiness of his *children*. All sin, therefore, which shall not operate to produce good to mankind, by manifesting the character and perfections of God their Heavenly Father to the Universe, to his praise, God will restrain.

There are reflections of deep import which result from this view of God's plan of creation, providence, and redemption. In the words of Paul, I ask, "Shall we, therefore, sin, that grace may abound?" No! "God forbid." Reader, to the man of vain imagination, who is so reckless of his character for truth and virtue, as to declare, that in proportion to the evidences of God's mercy and goodness, is his disposition and daring to sin and transgression, I will only say, "Surely the wrath of man shall praise God; and the remainder thereof he will restrain." And that "tribulation and anguish shall be upon every soul of man that doeth evil." Reader, what would you say of the claims of a man to sanity, who, because he had an able surgeon for his friend, should break his own bones, and inflict deep wounds in his flesh, from a conviction that his skilful and affectionate friend would set his bones, and bind up his wounds, out of prue benevolence. The man who will sin against his Heavenly Father, because he believes God is his father, and will pardon his sins, has the same claims to sanity, that the man would have, who should break his leg, and cut his fingers off, because he has a kind and skilful surgeon for his friend, who he believes, will heal his wounds *gratis*. Reason and philosophy teach man to forsake evil, for the reason that sin is a cheat, and the sinner a sufferer. The religion of the Bible, or gospel of Christ, teaches, that sin *deceives* man; that destruction and misery are in the way of the transgressors, and that the way of peace they have not known. Also, the divine truth, that Wisdom's ways are pleasant, and all her paths are peace.

Let the sober minded man, who prizes the truths of God's revelation above all price, give up his mind to reflection on these things; and remember that "God doth not afflict willingly [wantonly, and unnecessarily] nor grieve the children of men." The reflection that "Our Father's at the helm," that His glory is his *goodness*, and the *manifestation of His goodness*, His PURPOSE in the creation of man—that man's existence here in mortality is a stage in his journey to perfection and happiness, and that his sins and sufferings will eventuate in promoting his lasting good, and redound to the praise of his Heavenly Father, are considerations which will afford a consolation in the hour of trial, and in the moment of dissolution—these, and these only, will smoothe the bed of death, and light the pathway to the tomb.

Professing Christians of every name and sect, ponder these things. Your unbelief cannot make the word, promises, or faith of God of none effect. His ways will be justified. His goodness will be manifested. "The kingdoms of this world will become the kingdoms of our God, and of his Christ." He will "finish transgression, make an end of sins, and bring in everlasting righteousness." So says the Spirit. And we say, Amen. So let it be.

H. F.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

THE MOUTH OF HELL.

The believers in a place of eternal torments have certainly less faith, themselves, the present day, than the professors of the same comfortable belief had in former times. We occasionally meet with persons, who, quite satisfied that the Scriptures teach the interminable wrath of God against the wicked, and consequently, eternal punishment of some kind, are nevertheless willing to concede the point of the *actual cautery*; they have not quite such settled and definite ideas, of the place of punishment, and the mode, as their orthodox ancestors formerly had. They think it possible that the "worm that dieth not," may be as literal as the "fire which is not quenched;" and if so, that the punishment of the wicked may possibly be of a promethean character—substituting the worm for the vulture. Others, still more daring, have ventured to suppose the worm that dieth not, as symbolical of the gnawings of the guilty conscience; and, now I recollect, the poet Young has a line, somewhat strange for an orthodox writer: he says,

"The keen vibration of bright truth, is Hell!"

But, I maintain, that all these various notions, are dangerous departures from the old simple idea, of an immense place filled with fire and brimstone—generally dark from smoke, but now and then lit up by an emission of fresh flames, revealing the *bodies* of millions of the human race—suffering all the excruciating torture which fire inflicts on beings so sentient of pain—but, never consumed; having, one and all of them, been rendered, (by a reversal of Nature's laws,) capable of enduring the torment of fire, without perishing from its effects. The picture of course should be filled up with groans, curses, &c. of the Great First Cause of an existence, which had ended in so much misery. This, Sir, is I believe a pretty accurate description of the genuine orthodox notion of hell—as it is preached and believed, by those of the *true faith*. But there are as I have said, certain indications of wavering and uncertainty in these points, which in my opinion, call loudly on the champions of *truth*, particularly the writers and directors of Sunday School Unions, Tract Societies, &c. to redouble their efforts to secure "the local habitation," as well as the "name" of a certain personage—who shall be nameless. Let them, then, give us graphic delineations, as some of the old catholic painters were fond of doing; place the fire, and the smoke, and the sufferings of sinners, (we had nearly written, *martyrs*) before the eyes of adults and children; and show them visibly the arch-fiend, with his cloven feet, and his horns and tail, and pitch-fork; and his imps of a like description, dancing round the fires of the sufferers. Rely upon it, my brethren, something of this kind should be done; or, if you permit men to go on in this way, each man forming a hell after his own design, you will find hereafter, they will begin to doubt the existence of any place of the kind; and come at last to believe in the horrible doctrine, that the time will come when sin will cease, and with it suffering; that the bad man will be regenerated and consequently made happy;—in short, they will believe in that "doctrine of devils!" Universal Salvation!!

To assist you, my orthodox friends, in restoring the simple idea of *punishment by actual fire*, and thus to enable you to re-establish the locality of hell, I will close this article by transcribing certain stories, from a recent publication, in which you will find it very plainly and positively declared, not only that there is such a place as hell, but where its *mouth* is situated with various

other interesting particulars relating thereto. The relations are taken from a letter* from Cardinal Damiano to Pope Nicholas II, written about the year 1060; and if our Protestant friends can forgive its Catholic origin, would, we think, make an excellent Sunday School Tract; particularly if illustrated with an engraving, or it might, with a trifling alteration, be told with *great effect* at revival, camp meetings, &c. Now for the stories:

"A servant of God dwelt alone near Naples, on a lofty rock, hard by the high-way. As this man was singing hymns by night, he opened the window of his cell to observe the hour, when lo, he saw passing, many men, black as Æthiopians, driving a large troop of pack-horses laden with hay; and he was anxious to ask who they were, and why they carried with them this fodder for cattle? And they answered, we are evil spirits, and this food which we prepare is not for flocks or herds, but to foment those fires which are kindled against men's souls; for we wait, first for Pandulphus, prince of Capua, who now lies sick; and then for John, the Captain of the garrison of Naples, who as yet is alive and well! Then went that man of God to John, and related faithfully that which he had seen and heard. At that time the Emperor Otto II, being about to wage war on the Saracens, was journeying toward Calabria. John therefore answered, 'I must first go reverently and meet the Emperor, and take counsel with him concerning the state of this land. But after he is gone, I promise to forsake the world, and to assume the monastic habit.' Moreover, to prove whether the priests' story were true, he sent one to Capua, who found Pandulphus dead; and John himself lived scarce fifteen days, dying before the Emperor reached those parts; upon whose death the mountain Vesuvius, from which hell often belches forth, broke out into flames, as might clearly be proved, because the hay which these demons got ready, was nothing else than the fire of that fell conflagration prepared for these reprobate and wicked men; for as often as a reprobate rich man dies in those parts, the fire is seen to burst from the above-named mountain, and such a mass of sulphurous resin flows from it, as makes a torrent, which by its downward impulse, descends even to the seas. And in verity, a former Prince of Palermo, once saw from a distance, sulphurous pitchy flames, burst out from Vesuvius, and said that surely some rich man was just about to die, and go down to hell. Alas for the blinded minds of evil men! That very night as he lay regardless in bed, he breathed his last. There was also a Neapolitan Priest, who wished to know more of things not lawful to be known, who, when that infernal pit belched flames more fiercely than usual, with presumptuous boldness, resolved to visit it. So having solemnized the mass, he went on his way, armed as it were. with the sacred vestments; but this rash inquirer, approaching nearer than men use to go, never re-appeared, being unable to return. Another priest, who had left his mother sick at Benwenture, as he travelled through the bowels of Naples, and was intent upon the upstraining flames, heard a voice of one bewailing, which he perceived evidently to be the voice of his mother. He marked the time, and found it to have been the hour of her death."† W.

*Library of Entertaining Knowledge—Vol. xiii, part 1, Pompeii. We notice in another part of this volume, some very heterodox expressions—such as ought not to be tolerated in a popular work. For instance, speaking of a painted representation of Pluto, found amongst the ruins of Pompeii, the author says, "it is not unlike the modern vulgar notion of the devil, a fierce black-looking fellow, with horns and cloven feet."

† Damiani Epistolæ, lib. i. 9.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

THE GOOD WAY.

"But I will teach you the good and the right way." 1 Sam. xii, 23.

At the present day the question is frequently asked, "have you got religion?" "are you walking in the good and right way?" If the interrogator be answered, "I do not believe in the existence of a personal devil and an endless hell," the individual making this reply is immediately branded with the appellation of 'heretic,' 'infidel,' without any regard to his moral or christian character. In fact, he may have "fed the hungry, clothed the naked, visited the fatherless and widow in their afflictions, and kept himself unspotted from the world;" all these are nothing and worse than nothing, if the two above doctrines do not form an essential article of his religious belief. The man who discards these is considered in a very *bad* way, or rather he is altogether *out of* the way. The motto we have chosen, with its connexion, is diametrically opposed to the notion, that men cannot walk in the ways of truth and religion, divested of an implicit faith in the doctrine of unending misery, and a malignant, fallen, personal demon.

One of two things must be evident to every candid mind, that Samuel was incompetent to instruct men in the good and right way, or that the religion which God requires, can be practised without being incorporated with these dogmas. That the ability of Samuel, to teach men how to walk so as to meet the divine requirement, cannot be questioned, appears from the following: By consulting chapter 2, we find that "Samuel grew on and was in favor both with the Lord, and also with men;" and in chapter 3 it is declared, "All Israel, from Dan to Beersheba, knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of the Lord;" and in the verse immediately following the text, it is said, "Only fear the Lord and serve him in truth with all your heart: for consider how great things he hath done for you." Thus we have incontestible proof that Samuel was perfectly acquainted with practical religion, and was amply qualified to inculcate all its important truths. Hence the assertion, that men are in the wrong way, merely because they do not receive the dogma of endless misery, and the being of a personal devil, is erroneous from these considerations,

1st. Samuel had no knowledge of these two doctrines, or at least did not proclaim them.

2d. The fear and service of the Lord were perfomed by him, and he enjoined these duties on others.

Now if people could walk in the "good and right way" in the days of Samuel, while they were destitute of all knowledge respecting the two doctrines in question, may they not walk in wisdom's ways *now* while they discard them?

Samuel called upon the people over whom God had given him the supervision to *fear* the Lord, and he was no doubt aware that they were capable of exercising this fear, and of obeying the divine requirements; but let a man declare at the present day, that he has no fear of an "eternal hell," and he is instantly set down as an infidel, as one who "casts off fear and restrains prayer." Were Samuel to re-visit the earth and proclaim, "But I will teach you the good and the right way, only fear the Lord and serve him in truth with all your heart: for consider how great things he hath done for you; but if ye shall still do wickedly, ye shall both be consumed, both ye and your king," he would be accused by many of teaching "false doctrines;" he would be classed with "wicked Universalists," who profess to fear God and serve him, not because they are apprehensive of condign wo, but they are won to obedience by the mercy and benevolence of their heavenly Father—"the love of Christ constrains them." It would be well were every minister of the gospel to adopt this motto, "But I will teach you the good and the right way," and while it is their duty to teach men that they must fear God, we conceive it to be no part of the gospel of grace and peace to torture the mind with the fear of "impending and inextinguishable wrath."

What child can exercise towards its parent that kind of fear which is so intimately allied to filial duty, as to bear the same relation to perfect obedience that the effect does to the cause, if its mind be deeply impressed with the notion, that the father may *possibly* become ireful and implacable, if it fears nought but the rod? What man can truly say, I fear God and serve him—I entertain that "fear which is the beginning of wisdom," while he is harboring in his bosom a thousand agitating fears that he may, after all, lie down in unending pain? This is not "the good and the right way." "Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man." Let the ambassadors of Christ proclaim from Maine to Georgia, that "God is love," that he is good unto all, and his tender mercies are over all his works; that he is the tender Father, the benevolent Friend, of the whole human race, and many will be brought into the "good way." They will *fear*, not Jehovah's vengeance, but the hard way of transgression. Who that is fully convicted of the exhaustless benevolence of God, and his design to promote the present and future happiness of all his children, will *not* fear him? Samuel, David, and Solomon, feared the Lord, and taught others to do so; yet they were not influenced by a fear of endless misery, nor did they make use of it to reclaim their hearers. Were I called to proclaim "the unsearchable riches of Christ" to a nation beclouded in error and involved in wickedness, I should despair of leading them into the "good way," did I represent their Heavenly Father as an angry, vindictive being, capable of retaining his dreadful indignation to all eternity. In this way I might arouse their fears with regard to their personal safety, but I should not be teaching them the "good and the right way," for this is "to fear the *Lord* and serve him in truth with all your heart."

Christ preached, saying, "repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand;" but alas! too many professed "heralds of salvation" preach, "repent ye, or you must go down to the regions of infinite despair." Peter preached, saying, "repent ye, that your sins may be blotted out, but in these days of refined theology, we hear the exhortation, "repent and be converted, that the *just and deserved punishment for your sins may be blotted out*." Oh when shall we get into that "good" old "way" of teaching men what they ought to do, to "serve the Lord in truth with all their heart," instead of instructing them that the essentials of religion consist in a belief of certain dogmas, some of which are as monstrous as they are unscriptural and absurd.

We are to fear God and render him the service of our hearts, and why? Samuel answers: "for consider how great things he hath done for you." Here are motives presented for us to serve God, drawn from a consideration of his benevolence and care, and while we, as the ministers of reconciliation are reprehended for our endeavors to lead men into the "good way," by declaring the beneficence and mercy of our heavenly Father, divested of his wrath and cruelty, we leave our opponents to settle the matter with Samuel, and we will wait till they can prove that he preached more "terror" than we do.

New-York, Sept. 22, 1832. B. B. H.

Ask the advice of none whose conduct is not strictly honest—for such is worse than none.

True cheerfulness without undue levity, well becomes the followers of the Redeemer of mankind.

CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

EDITED BY T. J. SAWYER AND P. PRICE.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 1832.

NOTICE.

The usual order of exercises at the Orchard-st. Church is resumed. The morning service commences at half past ten, the afternoon at three, and the evening at 7 o'clock. The course of Sabbath evening Lectures, on the doctrines of Universalism, proposed to be delivered in this Church, will be postponed for a few weeks. Due notice will be given of their commencement.

PHILADELPHIA ASSOCIATION.

The Meeting of the Philadelphia Association of Universalists, will be held *at Hightstown, N. J.* on the 3d and 4th days of October next, *instead of Princeton*, as previously noticed, for reasons which will be fully explained to the session. The friends at Hightstown will please make the necessary arrangements, and extend the notice as widely as possible, that meeting for religious worship will be held on Wednesday and Thursday, the 3d and 4th days of October. It is expected there will be preaching at Princeton on the evening of the 3d, and at Kingston on the evening of the 4th. Ministering brethren will please call on Col. S. Johnes, Hightstown.

ABEL C. THOMAS,
Standing Clerk.

Philadelphia, Sept. 18, 1832.

DEDICATION.

The Meetinghouse lately erected by the Universalist Society in North Salem, N. Y. was solemnly dedicated to the service of the one only true and living God on Wednesday, the 19th inst. Invocation of the divine blessing, and Sermon from John iv, 23, by Br. T. J. Sawyer of New-York. Reading select portions of Scripture and consecrating prayer by Br. T. J. Whitcomb, of Schenectady. A discourse was also delivered in the afternoon by Br. Whitcomb, text Psalm xl, 4, and a Lecture was preached in the evening by Br. Rodgers, of Brookline, Pa.

The services throughout were well attended, and listened to with deep interest. The Society in this place deserve much praise for their persevering exertions in the cause of truth. A very neat and commodious house of sufficient dimensions is now their exclusive property, and they only need an able minister of the gospel to break to them the bread of life, in order to their permanent upbuilding. May the Lord soon direct amongst them a well qualified pastor, who shall go in and out before this people, and lead them in the paths of life and peace. Our cause in this section of the country is evidently on a rapid increase, and ministers of the word only, men of good hearts and sound heads, are necessary to secure a lasting prosperity.

THE RETROSPECT.

A leisure hour will occasionally occur, in which we are enabled to withdraw from the busy crowd, and muse on the passing scenes around us—to take a retrospect of the past, and to mark, especially, the surprising changes which the wheels of time are ever unfolding to our view. In our present situation, our attention, of necessity, will ever be drawn more particularly to the concerns of the religious world. Here is our field of labor, and it should not be at all surprising that here lies our deepest interest. In the natural course of our reflections, the varying aspect of the popular religious views of the day is not the least important. And in no denomination, perhaps, are these changes more apparent than in that of the Presbyterian.

Though in the mid-day of life we can well recollect the period, when this denomination was remarkable for its staid and sober habits of worship, when you could almost read their profession in the gravity of their phiz, and the mechanical movement of their persons—when their preachers would never presume to close an humble petition to the supreme ruler of all, without the important appendage, "Let all things be done decently and in order." This order would be easily understood by the character of their worship, which was grounded on the rigid requirements of the Calvinistic doctrine of election and reprobation—a doctrine which claims the total yielding up of its votaries to the "*Divine Sovereignty*"—which says to them "be still and *know* that I am God," in the most extended sense of that term—which requires them to regard their "particular election" with a kind of "*awful* approbation," and even to *praise* the "glorious justice" of their Maker, "in their eternal damnation." A doctrine, as it was wont to be held forth, which wholly discountenanced every approach to enthusiasm and excitement. And here lay its peculiar beauty, and even its boast. The gravity and order of its exercises were an especial evidence of its truth, and its emanation from above.

We may be allowed to know something of its character and requirements, for it was in this we were educated, and we well remember the listening to many a lecture, in our younger days, against the follies, the absurdities, and the fanaticism of the Arminian worship. We have repeatedly known this denomination, who were then coming into more immediate notice through the country, looked upon with a kind of pious abhorrence—as brawlers and disorganizers, and their scenes of worship regarded as a fit sample of Bedlam. We have heard congregations warned to shun them, as they would the "wicked one." And these warnings would not be left on the simple declarations of the preacher. He would labor zealously to support them by what he deemed sound scripture proof.

But alas! for the mutation of all earthly things. What a change some twenty or thirty years has exhibited before us. What has been regarded the soundest doctrines of Theology, have come within the grasp of the destroying fingers of time, and have passed into the ocean of forgetfulness, or have undergone such changes and alterations as to retain scarcely a semblance of their former selves. What was regarded the rankest heresy then, is now, in the same order of churches, viewed as the soundest orthodoxy. It is true, some yet cling with the most faithful ardor to their "first love;" but this class is evidently in the minority, and the "early glory" of the denomination may be said to have passed away forever. For instance, who would ever recognize in a modern revival assembly, (and we believe they have become the order of the day in the Presbyterian denomination) the Presbyterian mode of worship, either in doctrine or practice, of 20 or 30 years since? Who, that had not grown up an observer of their change, would ever dream of looking there for those who could denounce, in no measured terms, the poor, infatuated Methodist, as he was formerly regarded? And yet this very denomination, in many places, will *now* outstrip the Methodists themselves, in many of their extravagancies, during the most noisy period of their history—will almost put them to the *blush* for their want of zeal in the worship of their Maker.

This almost total change, is equally discernible through their acknowledged doctrines. The good old fashioned way of relying on the grace and mercy of God for salvation, seems to have become obsolete, and a sett of new-fangled *reliances* substituted in their stead. A species of soul-saving system is put in motion, by man, and the various performers in the work are urged and entreated by every consideration that can be drawn from the happiness of the saints in glory, or the misery of the dammed in hell, to faithfully sustain their parts. And after all their exertion, they are to indulge in fearful apprehensions, lest their "endeavors" may be "weighed in the balance, and found wrong." We should almost conclude, judging from the motives and inducements placed before men in modern times, that the idea of a Savior from on high, was as far removed from them, as it was from those in the depths of heathen darkness. We discover nought but a systematic reliance on human efforts and human means. A regular calculation of *pounds, shillings, and pence*, in the great work of salvation. Sometimes even minute estimates are resorted to, in showing how far a few paltry pence will go in saving poor immortal souls from scenes of ceaseless and indescribable agony. The consolatory and cheering invitation, "Ho every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters," appears to be lost in the effort to hew out "other cisterns"—"broken cisterns," we fear, "which will hold no water!"

These are some of the striking changes, which a retrospect of our own short pilgrimage presents to view, and although for the time we might prefer the rigid but sure character of Calvinism, to the weak and imbecile nature of Modern Theology, we can harbor little doubt that good will come out of the latter. It is not calculated to satisfy the mind, and when that has once over stepped the bounds of tradition, and mounted on the wings of inquiry, you might as well attempt to chain the winds of heaven, as to stop its flight, until it has reached the ark of Truth—till it has sought out its own native fountain of goodness and love.

Notwithstanding our confidence in these beneficial results, there is a gratification in the retrospect—a kind of melancholy pleasure in recalling to view our early faith, inconsistent as that faith may now appear to us. For we have an abiding consciousness, that however erroneous it was, we went up to its temple to worship with clean hands and a pure heart—though the veil of ignorance was cast over us, the grateful homage of honest hearts, was a far more acceptable service to the Governor of all, than the lip-service

of the mere pretender. And may we not reasonably calculate there was as great, or a greater share of real devotion in those days, as in modern times, how great soever may be present pretension? And will it not become us all, therefore, "to ponder well the path of our feet," lest in our zeal to pay "tithes of mint, annise, and cummin," we lose sight of the "weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith?" P.

THE REVIVAL PRESS.

We have remarked in another place, that present efforts in the religious world appear to be characterized by an almost total reliance on human efforts and human means, in the work of salvation. Notwithstanding almost every page of the New-Testament exhibits the most pointed reproof to all trust in the imperfect wisdom of man, yet the natural and inevitable tendency of the popular teachings of the day, is to foster and promote such a trust. And we may see multitudes following in the train of these teachings, relying with the most perfect confidence on this worldly wisdom, and laboring with all the zeal attendant on a dread reality, in treasuring up a store of these "good works," in the vain hope that they will hereafter appear in the opposite scale, in settling their concerns for eternity. A species of infatuation seizes upon them, and in their progress, reason and revelation are both set at defiance. An attendance on their preaching, or an examination of most of their publications, will fully exemplify this. We have just risen from the perusal of one of their "Revival Papers," and there is scarcely a column in which we do not find a passionate entreaty to put forth an "arm of flesh," in saving men from the "wrath of God," or some new expedient calculated to enlist the passions and prejudices of mankind. The first which more especially attracted our attention, was the subject of *Tract Distribution*. After a brief exordium on its importance, a solemn appeal is made to each Distributor, to put these questions to themselves:

"How stands my account in the sight of God as it respects the souls committed to my care in the district in which I distribute these winged messengers of salvation?

Have any in my district been cut down by the destroying angel? and if so, did I on my last visit to them faithfully warn them to flee from the wrath to come? Finally, am I prepared to meet the several families of my charge at the bar of God?"

These queries are deemed of the highest importance by the writer, and he trusts, they will be answered as "in the presence of a heart-searching God." This has frequently been denominated an "age of discovery," and it surely must have been left for the period of revival times, to seek out this far "more excellent way of salvation." The Royal Psalmist was sadly in fault in trusting so fully "in the God of his Salvation." The early promulgators of Christianity, too, must have been poorly prepared for their arduous labors, being totally ignorant of the virtues of "winged messengers of salvation," in the form of little fabulous stories.

In another column we find a spirited letter, detailing the wonderful effects of *protracted meetings*, from which we extract the following:

"From the results of the efforts made in several neighborhoods in this town, during the past year, there can be little doubt that the true way to get access to the minds of the people around our villages, is to go on the ground, preach the word, and *continue to hold on*, until an impression is produced, and the hard and stubborn hearts are made to bow under the influence of the Spirit and word of God. Let the effort be made by all the ministers of Oneida presbytery, and I venture to predict, that soon the joy of salvation will be heard on every side, and the death like stupor which now reigns on all this region will be broken up, and sinners will in multitudes be converted to God."

Comment is hardly necessary here. The primitive ministers of the Gospel, must have been "unskilful workmen" indeed, and totally ignorant of the "TRUE WAY *to get access to the minds of the people*," by continuing "*to hold on*," after the fashion of revival men of the day. Instead of exhibiting to their hearers a God of "inextinguishable wrath," they were content to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ—to entreat their auditors to "love God, because he *first* loved them!" In the present case, however, only let the ministers of the Presbytery consent "*to hold on*," and "sinners" would be "converted to God" by "multitudes."

In a subsequent part of the same paper, we meet with still another "new invention." The Editor in reply to a request from abroad, for laborers in the "revival field," has the following *comprehensive* language---"You need WORKING MEN," and "many such, I hope, we shall ere long send to your aid, and to the blessing of the churches in the west." The public have long been familiar with the term "Workies," as applied to political parties, but the appellation "Working men" as attached to ministers, we think will be something new. We have no objection, however, to the term, if rightly applied. Paul was a "working man," but we very much doubt whether those in question are "workng men" in the same sense that he was.

Finally; in another part, we read of a church which has been blessed in obtaining a pastor, who is "a gentleman of talents and education, and a "WORKING MAN.'" We hope he may be found "a workman approved of God," and we heartily wish we might see in the labors of some of those who would come under the "approbation" of this Editor, fruits meet for the Gospel of Christ---such as would stand the following test: "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth, is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is love."

The above quotations are but a brief specimen of one of these papers. They are sufficient, however, to show the *Spirit of the Revival Press*, and that even in the cause of Religion, hackneyed political terms are resorted to—shall we say for *effect?* P.

HUDSON RIVER ASSOCIATION.

By the last Gospel Anchor, we have received the Minutes of the session of the Hudson River Association, noticed in our last. The Council was organized by choosing Br. T. J. Sawyer Moderator, and Br. R. O. Williams, Clerk. We have room only for a summary view. Among the ordinary business of the session, Br. I. D. Williamson, C. F. Le Fevre, and T. J. Sawyer, were appointed a Committee "to ascertain the Societies which are within the limits of this Association, the names of all the officers and number of persons belonging to such Societies, and publish them; and also to render such aid as they may be able in the formation of new Societies—and that the Chairman of said Committee urge each Society to send delegates to the next meeting of this Association."

Br. T. J. Sawyer was appointed to deliver a Sermon before the Council of the Association, at its next annual Session. Br. I. D. Williamson was also appointed to deliver an Address before the Council of the Association, "the object of which will be to present a statistical view of the different Societies in fellowship, and to offer such information with respect to the formation of others as may be deemed advantageous."

Brs. C. F. Le Fevre and T. J. Sawyer, Ministers, and S. Van Shaack and A. A. Hill, Laymen, were appointed Delegates to the next annual session of the New-York State Convention; and Br. J. C. Newell and T. J. Whitcomb, Ministers, and E. Murdock and J. C. Kemble, Laymen, as substitutes. Brs. C. F. Le Fevre, I. D. Williamson, and R. O. Williams were appointed a Committee of Discipline for the year ensuing. Letters of fellowship were granted the brethren named in our last. The following resolution was also adopted:

"*Resolved*, That individuals desirous of receiving the fellowship of this Association, shall be required to present to the Committee appointed for receiving requests for letters of fellowship, a certificate from some accredited preacher in our order, that he has pursued the study of Theology under his direction, for the full period of six months, and that in the opinion of said preacher he is worthy of fellowship, and qualified for the work of the ministry: And further, that he shall be able to pass a good examination before said Committee, in the principles of the English language, Rhetoric and Logic; and shall deliver before the Council to whom his application shall be made, an Essay on some moral or doctrinal subject: Provided, nevertheless, that so much of this resolution as relates to time spent in study, be not understood as applying to any who have been in fellowship as ministers in any other denomination of christians."

Appointed Br. Williamson to prepare the Minutes and Circular Letter. The Association adjourned to meet at Eaton's Corners in Duanesburgh, Schoharie county, on the second Wednesday and following Thursday of September, 1833. The Circular is not yet received.

The following Ministering Brethren were present: T. J. Sawyer, New-York; J. C. Newell, Stephentown; A. Bond, Bennington, Vt.; R. O. Williams, Amsterdam; T. J. Whitcomb, Schenectady; I. D. Williamson and Henry Gifford, Albany; C. F. Le Fevre, and J. M. Austin, Troy. Six Sermons were delivered in the following order: Brs. R. O. Williams, A. Bond, J. C. Newell, T. J. Sawyer, T. J. Whitcomb, and I. D. Williamson.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

CHRIST WEEPETH OVER JERUSALEM.

By a reference to Luke, 19th chapter, we are informed, that our Lord foretold the destruction and judgments, which were to befal that ill-fated people, the Jews. He looked with a prophetic eye into the future, and beheld their calamities which he described as truly horrible, such as never had been, nor ever should be. With all the feelings of a philanthropist, and love for the human species, he deplored their evil destiny, and wept over the sufferings to be showered upon their devoted heads. "How oft," said he, "would I have gathered thee, as a hen gathereth her chickens, but ye would not." But how infinitely small, how insignificant, a mere sand on the sea-shore, were the tribulations of the Jews, compared with that misery in a future state, which we often hear described by a popular theology. Is it not surprising that Christ should have pourtrayed the judgments on Jerusalem in such vivid colors, and left us in doubt and uncertainty, even with respect to the location of that dreadful place, where, by far the greater proportion of our race, are to be the recipients of sufferings, more horrible than tongue can tell or imagination conceive. Nay, that he should never express one sentiment of sympathy, one spark of pity or compassion, for the state of those miserable wretches, who shall be the victims of God's wrath, so long as he shall endure, The truth is, had he known that such was to be the portion of *any* part of mankind, his finer sensibilities would have been roused, I had almost said, to a pitch of frenzy. For never was there a being, who expressed such humanity, such interest for the welfare of the human race. We must therefore conclude, that to him a state of

endless sufferings was unknown, and now exists only as an idle dream, or chimera of the imagination. J. R.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

Messrs. Editors—Lately while looking over the Methodist Paper, called Christian Advocate and Journal, of August 10th, my attention was arrested by an article headed, "How did the Apostles preach?"—and found in the answer, among other extraordinary things, "that they explored the earth, and emptied heaven, and drained hell, in order to find motives by which they might load down the conscience of the sinner and persuade him to become reconciled to God!"

Now it appears to me if this was a fair sample of Apostolic Preaching, that modern revival Preachers have greatly deviated from the Apostolic practice; for it is notorious that they draw the strongest motive, from representing the *great* number of the blessed in heaven, and the still *greater* number of the tormented in hell. But how this motive can exist, when heaven is "emptied," and hell is "drained," we have not capacity to comprehend, and we wait for the Editors of that Paper to inform us. G.

Southold, Aug. 27, 1832.

INCIDENTS IN THE LIFE OF A PREACHER.

Soon after my location as the servant of a particular society, the great destroyer of our youth, the consumption, entered the family of one of our most devoted and worthy friends. The victim was such an one as is frequently marked out to grace the triumphs of death, and to add keener anguish to the heart, by blasting its joys, and its fondest hopes. It was an interesting female of *seventeen*—nursed in the bosom of more than common tenderness, and doated on as one that might be spared for the comfort of a father—the joy of a mother—from whom the same disease had already wrested *two* daughters of similar age.

An intimacy of several years, not only gave me the privileges of a friend, in this family, but awakened all my sympathies in their solicitude for the result of the visible changes which were daily passing over their child. Week after week, and month after month passed away, with all the mysterious hopes and fears which alternately accompany the incipient progress of this flattering and insidious—yet indefatigable destroyer. We had watched the changes as they successively passed over her—from the slight hectic—the crimson circle on the cheek—the dry and pale hand, to the unearthly brilliancy of the eye—the emaciated frame and exhausted voice which sunk to an almost inaudible whisper—and now saw that all was lost.

As yet no voice had broken the silence to the young sufferer, respecting the certainty of her approaching death. Fear, that it might have an unfavorable influence by disturbing her mind, and thereby lessening the probable utility of medical aid, had hitherto been the restraining cause. But the time had now come when all hopes were at an end; and when prudence and humanity prompted a free discourse on one of the most interesting of all subjects—the prospect of death. A mother—the most suitable person in the world—ventured to ask her views in relation to futurity. She expressed her views, with great freedom and pleasure, and seemed to have anticipated the views and feelings of all her friends.

On one of the occasional visits made by me at this house in the early spring of 1819, it was observed, that she wished to know my opinion on Mark xvi, 16, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; and he that believeth not, shall be damned." On being asked what she desired to know respecting this passage, she replied—"what the damnation was, and how long it would last."

It was then observed to her—that the *condemnation* was that state of mind induced by unbelief—not that mere unbelief was, in itself, the object of chastisement: but that it was the reason why the individual remained in the same moral condition from which the Gospel was designed to save him. And that this state of condemnation would be *as lasting* as the unbelief, and no longer, for "he that believeth shall be saved." Proof was also adduced, that "all should be taught of God---and that all the ends of the world should remember and turn to the Lord, and all the kindreds of the nations come and worship before him." This was the only text concerning which she felt any solicitude, and with this construction she was perfectly satisfied: and could not refrain from expressing her surprise that she should not have perceived the subject in this light before.

The following morning, on entering her room, she gave me her hand, and with a smile observed, that she thought she had lived about long enough. To my question, what made her think so? extending her bare and emaciated hand, she replied, "Look here, my flesh is gone, my strength and my voice exhausted; and on the whole, I think I am willing to die." But you have friends, many and affectionate young companions, and you have every comfort and enjoyment that wealth can give you; and do you not wish to live and enjoy these? "True, I have friends and love their society, but am too feeble to bear it; enjoyments are around me, but without health I cannot partake of them." Well, would you not, on the whole, prefer to get well if it were possible? "No, I think not. If my health could be restored by a miracle instantaneously, perhaps I should prefer it, but in the ordinary course of events, my sufferings would be so great, even in recovering, that I think I am willing to die."

It was my impression that this unusual cheerfulness, and resignation under sufferings, and in the near approach of death, resulted from moderately elated feelings, a momentary excitement, which would pass away, as the conversation which had evidently inspired it should fade from the memory; and that when the hour of trial should come, she would shrink back and still cling to life. But I was mistaken; her views were the result of sober thinking, and were founded in deeper convictions than are ever produced by a single conversation. They had, no doubt, been growing up into perfection for many months and were elicited by removing the obstacle to their disclosure, in the reply to her question on the preceding evening.

This last conversation was on Saturday morning. The next day I saw her friends called from the church, and as the night closed in, learned the time of her departure had indeed come. But the same holy patience, the same strength of mind, and the same unyielding fortitude continued to sustain her. She was sensible that the period of her sufferings was about to come to an end; and she looked forward to her emancipation with a calm and chastened spirit—cheerful even in death. She saw her own grave clothes provided, and directed many things in relation to her death and burial.

As the pulse withdrew from the extremities, she remarked the sensation, judged correctly of its import; and with great tenderness encouraged her father to avow the fact, who hesitated lest he might shock her constancy by the assurance of what he anticipated. Her sight grew dim, and she requested that a light might be held near the clock standing in her room; told the hour, took leave of her friends, closed her eyes, and folding her arms across the breast, said, "I am ready." * * * * * *

She was gone; she who the moment before lived, and exerted an intelligence that reached every thing within her sphere, was now lying in the solemn and cold stillness of death. And that intellect which raised her above her years, and which was enriched with the highest moral dignity, had found its proper home, the bosom of its God.

Such was the death-bed of a female, *seventeen years old;* and such the undoubted influence of the doctrine of the salvation and immortal felicity of all mankind. For under its benign power she had been educated---had seen its spirit exemplified by the older members of her family, and had learned to live in obedience to its purifying precepts. Her life had been such as to give her no compunctions in the retrospect: and her cherished confidence in God forbade all fears, and all anxieties for the future. Her faith in the divine promises was one of assurance, and her hope of another and an immortal existence triumphantly supported her through the "valley of the shadow of death."

Let the youth, especially those who are most sensitive on the subject of death and futurity, learn from the example here presented, to live like her, that like her their deaths may be resigned and happy.---*Magazine and Advocate.*

*** Br. A. C. T's reply to the Review of his article on the "Lord's Supper," is received. We were desirous of getting the Paper out earlier than usual, and had matter so in hand, on its receipt, that we had not room for it in the present No. It will appear next week.

The favor of our respected correspondent "G." of Southold, dated September 16, is received. We do not exactly like the *field* he has selected for his labors in this article. We fear with all the toil in it, it will only produce "briers and thorns." However, as we have not room for it this week, we will hold it under further consideration.

The favor of J. G. of Holmesville, Ga. is received. The Senior Editor has been absent for a short time, and will still be away for 2 or 3 weeks to come, or possibly more. As soon as he returns, the request will be cheerfully complied with, and we hope to our friend's satisfaction.

L. L. S. is welcome again. He will accept our thanks for the *double* favor he has bestowed.

RELIGIOUS NOTICES.

Br. L. F. W. Andrews will supply the desk in Orchard-street to-morrow.

Br. Wm. Whittaker, senior, recently from England, will preach at Norwalk, Ct. Sunday, 7th of October; at Saugatuck, on Tuesday evening the 9th, at Bethel, Friday evening, 12th; at Danbury Sunday the 14th, and at Newtown, Sunday the 21st. The brethren at Danbury and Newtown can make such arrangements as may be convenient, for two evening lectures, between the 14th and 21st.

Br. S. J. Hillyer, will preach at Hightstown, to-morrow, 30th inst. and at Easton, Penn. on Sunday, the 14th October.

Br. B. B. Hallock will preach at Peekskill, to-morrow, 30th inst.

Br. L. F. W. Andrews, will preach at Kingston, N. J. on Friday evening, the 5th of Oct. and at Hightstown, N. J. on the 1st Sunday of Oct.

LETTERS AND REMITTANCES.

Received at this office, ending September 9th.

H. and M. Norwalk, $2; A. W. T. New-Orleans $3; G. A. $2, and J. S. B. $1, Stamford; Horace Bailey $2,50 and Hackaliah Bailey, $2, Somers; D. H. Frankfort; P. M. Bridgeport; Rev. A. C. T. Philadelphia; P. M. New-Brunswick; A. P. Wyoming, $2; J. P. Pavilion, $1; H. B. Darien, Ct. $2; J. C. K. Troy.

BEAUTY'S GRAVE.

Tread softly, stranger! this is ground
Which no rude footstep should impress;
With tender pity gaze around,
Let sadness all thy soul possess.
Tread softly! lest thou crush the flowers
That o'er this turf are taught to wave,
Transplanted from their native bowers
To shed their sweets o'er 'Beauty's grave.'

And stranger, let your melting heart
Mark well this fresh and verdant sod!
And ere you from the scene depart,
O! let your soul commune with God.
Thus fade the fragile buds of earth,
Thus fade the lovely and the brave!
Come here, ye thoughtless sons of mirth,
And pause awhile o'er 'Beauty's grave.'

Sweet withered rose! may thy pale doom
Call tears into the virgin's eye!
Oh may the prospect of this tomb
Remind her 'all that live must die!'
And warn her in the days of youth,
To think of him who being gave,
And bid her seek the ways of truth,
Like her who sleeps in 'Beauty's grave.'

PETITION TO TIME.

BY BARRY CORNWALL.

Touch us gently Time!
Let us glide down thy stream
Gently—as we sometimes glide
Through a quiet dream!
Humble voyagers are We,
Husband, wife, and children three—
(One is lost—an angel fled
To the azure over head:)

Touch us gently, Time!
We've not proud nor soaring wings:
Our ambition, *our* content
Lies in simple things.
Humble voyagers are We,
O'er Life's dim unsounded sea,
Seeking only some calm clime:—
Touch us *gently*, gentle Time!

NATURAL DREAD OF DEATH.

It seems to us strange—it seems as if it was wrong, in a world where from the very constitution of things, death must close every scene of human life, where it hath reigned for ages over all generations, where the very air we breathe and the dust we tread upon was once animated life—it seems to us most strange and wrong, that this most common and necessary expedient, and certain of all events, should bring such horror and desolation with it; that it should bring such tremendous agitation, as if it were some awful and unprecedented phenomenon: that it should be more than death—a shock, a catastrophe, a convulsion, as if nature, instead of holding on its steady course were falling into irretrievable ruin.

And that which is strange, is our strangeness to this event. Call sickness, we repeat, call pain, an approach to death. Call the weariness and the failure of the limbs and senses, call decay, dying. It is so; it is a gradual loosening of the cords of life, and a breaking up of its reservoirs and resources. So 'I feel'—will the thoughtful man say—I feel a pang of suffering, as it were, piercing and cutting asunder, one by one, the fine and invisible bonds that hold me to the earth. I feel the gushing current of life within me to be wearing away its channels

I feel the sharpness of every keen emotion, and of every acute and far penetrating thought, as it were shortening the moment of the soul's connection and conflict with the body. So it is, and so it shall be, till at last, the silver cord is loosened, and the golden bowl is broken, and the pitcher is broken at the fountain, and the wheel is broken at the cistern, and the dust returns to the earth as it was, and the spirit returns unto God who gave it.

No, it is not a strange dispensation. Death is the fellow of all that is earthly, the friend of man alone. It is the law, and lot of nature.

'Nor to thy eternal resting place
Shalt thou retire alone. Thou shalt lie down
With patriarchs of the infant world, with kings,
The powerful of the earth, the wise and good,
Fair forms and hoary seers of ages past,
All in one mighty sepulchre. The hills,
Rock ribbed, and ancient as the sun; the vales,
Stretched in pensive quietness between;
The venerable woods, rivers that move
In majesty, and the complaining brooks
That like the meadows green—and poured round all,
Old Ocean's grey and melancholy waste—
Are but the solemn decorations all
Of the great tomb of man.'

But what is the tomb? Doth the spirit die? Do the best affections of the soul go down into the dark and silent grave? Oh! no. The narrow house and pall and breathless darkness, and funeral train---these belong not to the soul. They proclaim only the body's dissolution. They but celebrate the vanishing away of the shadow of existence. Man does not die, though the forms of popular speech thus announce his exit. He does not die. We bury not our friend, but only the form, the vehicle in which, for a time, our friend, the parent, the child, the companion, the cherished being. No it is not; blessed be God that we can say: It is not! It is the material world only that earth claims.

It is 'dust' only that 'descends to dust.' The grave. Let us break the awful spell, its dread dominion. It is the place where man lays down his weakness, his infirmity, his diseases, and and sorrows, that he may rise up to a new and glorious life. It is the place where man ceases—in all that is frail and decaying---ceases to be a man, that he may be, of glory and blessedness, an angel of light.

Why then should we fear death, save as the wicked fear and must fear it? Why dread to lay down this frail body in its resting place, and this weary aching head on the pillow of its repose? Why tremble at this---that in the long sleep of the tomb the body shall suffer disease no more, and pain no more, and hear no more the cries of want, and the groans of distress; and far retired from the turmoil of life, that violence and change shall pass lightly over it, and the elements shall beat, and the storm shall sigh unheard around its bed? Say, ye aged and infirm, is it the greatest of evils to die? Say, ye children of care and toil, ye afflicted and tempted, is it the greatest of evils to die?

O! no, come the last hours in God's own time! and a good life and a glorious hope shall make it welcome. Come the hour of release; and affliction shall make it welcome. Come the hour of re-union with the loved and lost on earth!---and the passionate yearnings of affection and the strong aspirations of faith shall bear us to their blessed land. Come death to this body---this burthened, tempted, frail, failing, dying body!—and to the soul come freedom, light, and joy unceasing!—come the immortal life!—'He that liveth, saith the conqueror over Death---he that liveth and believeth in me shall never die.'---*Christian Examiner.*

EXTRACT.

The human imagination is an ample theatre, upon which every thing in human life, good or bad, great or mean, laudable or base, is acted. How happy is that mind in which the light of real knowledge dispels the phantoms of superstition; *in which the belief and reverence of a perfect, all-governing mind casts out all fear, but the fear of acting wrong;* in which security and cheerfulness, innocence, humanity and candor, guard the imagination against the entrance of every unhallowed intruder, and invite more amiable and worthier guests to dwell. The man whose mind is occupied by these guests, must be wise; he must be good; and he must be happy. *Reid's Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man, Ess. iv.*

There have been men indeed splendidly wicked, whose employments throw a brightness on their crimes, and whom, scarce any villany made perfectly detestable, because they never could be wholly divested of their excellencies; but such have been in all ages the great corruptors of the world, and their resemblance ought no more to be preserved than the art of murdering without pain.

"UNIVERSALIST EXPOSITOR."

As the "UNIVERSALIST EXPOSITOR" has been finally given over, by its former company of Proprietors, (its subscription list being transferred to one of our weekly papers,) the subscribers have formed a new company with the hope of reviving the work. They will continue it under the Title of the

EXPOSITOR:

AND UNIVERSALIST REVIEW;

which will be published in the same form, and at the same periods as the Expositor heretofore has been, and on similar paper, with the same size page and type, and at the same price, though the *number* of its pages will be somewhat increased.

To those acquainted with the former Expositor it may be sufficient to say that we aim at following out the plan originally drawn for that work; with one addition, however, which we trust will increase its value: we mean, the department of Review. That we must maintain the character of the publication as high, at least, as its former standard, we are well aware, unless we would forfeit the patronage which our brother Editors and several of our Associations have, especially of late, extended towards it. To their continued favor we humbly commend the undertaking.

PLAN OF THE WORK.

It will consist chiefly of—

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Reviews of such important Works as may be deemed specially interesting to Universalists;

A general Review of the present state of our Doctrine and Denomination, in this country, and as far as practicable, in other countries.

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